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NAVY AND MARINE CORPS MEDICAL NEWS
MN-00-37
SEPTEMBER 15, 2000

Navy and Marine Corps Medical News (MEDNEWS) is a weekly compendium of news and information contributed by commands throughout the Navy medical department. Information contained in MEDNEWS stories is not necessarily endorsed by Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED), nor should it be considered official Navy policy.

BUMED distributes MEDNEWS to Sailors and Marines, their families, civilian employees and retired Navy and Marine Corps families. Further distribution is highly encouraged.

Stories in MEDNEWS use these abbreviations after a Navy medical professional's name to show affiliation: MC - Medical Corps (physician); DC - Dental Corps; NC - Nurse Corps; MSC - Medical Service Corps (clinicians, researchers and administrative managers). Hospital Corpsmen (HM) and Dental Technician (DT) designators are placed in front of their names.

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STORIES:

Headline: Orthodontist brings optimization to Zama
By Bill Doughty, U. S. Naval Hospital Yokosuka

YOKOSUKA, Japan - In a joint effort to implement the ideas of optimization, Camp Zama, Japan recently welcomed its first orthodontist to its base.

Army Major David Fleming provides orthodontic services to the Army and Navy beneficiaries and their families from neighboring Atsugi Air Facility.

"The patient population at each military installation is too small to warrant a full-time orthodontist," said Capt. Wally Milnichuk, Commanding Officer of U. S. Naval Dental Center Far East. "However, when presented as a single catchment area the family member population showed there was more than enough work for an orthodontist."

For many years orthodontists from Yokota and Yokosuka

visited the Zama-Atsugi area to provide braces, bands and wires to a select few. Unfortunately, this meant reduced efficiency, inequality, and less continuity of care for patients and providers.

Just prior to the Army-Navy resource-sharing initiative, Navy dental leaders considered referring patients off base under the TRICARE Family Member Dental Plan (TFMDP), but that alternative was costly.

Each military family served by this joint effort saves \$2,500 in cost share per family member treated and for some families another \$10 to \$20 per month in TFMDP premiums, according to Milnichuk. That is another \$250,000 in military family dollars saved each year, he said.

Finally, thanks to this joint resource-sharing venture, orthodontists at mainland Japan's major military treatment facilities in Yokosuka and Yokotan now see about 8.5 percent more patients at their parent activities and save money traveling as well.

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Headline: Town hall meetings educate about FEHBP

From TRICARE Management Activity

WASHINGTON - The Department of Defense (DoD) has scheduled several town hall-style educational sessions this fall on the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) demonstration project.

The sessions will provide eligible beneficiaries in new and existing FEHBP sites information about the DoD demonstration project. In addition, the town hall format will allow participants to ask questions and hold one-on-one conversations with the program managers.

The next scheduled town hall meeting will be held in Puerto Rico, Coffee County, Ga., Humboldt County, Ca., Camp Pendleton, Ca., and Adair County, IA. Meeting times are subject to change, so interested persons should call the DoD Customer Care Center toll free at 877-DOD-FEHB (877-363-3342) to confirm the times and locations. For information in Spanish, call toll free at 866-DOD-FEHB (866-363-3342).

The DoD now has 10 FEHBP sites and 120,000 eligible beneficiaries. By statute, the demonstration is limited to no more than 66,000 total participants. For a complete list of ZIP codes in the demonstration sites, please visit the Military Health System/TRICARE Web site at www.tricare.osd.mil/fehbp, or call the DoD Customer Care Center.

The next enrollment opportunity at all FEHBP demonstration sites begins Nov. 13, 2000, during the annual open season (from Nov. 13 through Dec. 11). Medical coverage for new participants begins Jan. 1, 2001, and runs through Dec. 31, 2002.

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Headline: NH Jax has newest member of the ASBS

By JO3 LeaVonda Battle, Naval Hospital Jacksonville

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. - Naval Hospital Jacksonville commends Lt. Cmdr. Miguel Cubano, MC, a hospital surgeon, for his selection

into the American Society for Bariatric Surgery (ASBS), a professional organization that studies the advanced specifics of obesity.

"Bariatric surgery is a process used to help patients who have serious medical conditions secondary to obesity. Just being overweight does not make a patient a candidate for this surgery," said Cubano. "For those patients that are candidates for the surgery, it is instrumental in assisting them to live a more productive and healthy lifestyle."

To be nominated is a selective process. Cubano had to meet the organization's professional criteria and receive a personal invitation from the organization. Cubano also needed two recommendations by active members of the society and was subject to several interviews.

"Being selected into the ASBS is a great honor for me, because the process is so selective," said Cubano. "There are only two physicians in Jacksonville who are members."

Naval Hospital Jacksonville is the only military treatment facility that provides bariatric surgery. Military beneficiaries worldwide are transferred to the hospital for the service.

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Headline: Upcoming symposium focuses on health excellence
By Rod Duren, Naval Hospital Pensacola

PENSACOLA, Fla. - Authors, fitness guru's and a marathon champion will all be part of the 4th Annual Health Excellence Symposium November 1-3 at the Beachside Resort in Pensacola Beach.

The symposium promotes quality of life and prevention of illness through an active partnership between the military and civilian communities.

Registration is limited to the first 450 people who sign up by October 6. The cost for the 3-day conference is \$60. After that date, the cost is \$75. For those attending one day, the rate is \$30. For students, hospital employees, and wellness coordinators the rate is \$20.

Special guest speakers include:

- Dr. Amy Puls, a licensed facilitator for Dr. John Gray's "Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus" teaching style will be among the headline guests.
- Four-time New York City Marathon and four-time Boston Marathon winner Bill Rodgers.
- Joe Piscatella: Founder and president of the Institute for Fitness and Health, a best-selling author and has appeared as a health authority for numerous TV shows.

For additional information visit our website at http://psaweb.med.navy.mil/hlth/SYMP0SIUM_00.htm or call (850) 505-6339.

The symposium is co-sponsored by Naval Hospital Pensacola, Baptist Healthcare, Sacred Heart Healthcare, West Florida Regional Medical Center, Pensacola Junior College, University of West Florida, Escambia School District and the American Lung Association.

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Headline: Anthrax question and answer

Question: Was the anthrax vaccine FDA-licensed at the time it was given to Gulf War veterans?

Answer: Yes. The FDA licensed the anthrax vaccine in 1970. All of the anthrax vaccine administered during the Persian Gulf War was produced at the Lansing, MI, facility and released according to the lot-release test criteria for potency, purity, safety, and sterility.

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Headline: TRICARE question and answer

Question: Can my son or daughter, who is away from home at college, enroll in TRICARE Prime at his college if the option is available there?

Answer: For active duty families, your son or daughter may enroll in TRICARE Prime as an individual if the option is offered in his or her geographic area. Retiree's and their family members will have the option of split enrollments (enroll as a family in one region and pay one fee but be able to receive care for children in school in a different region) once all regions are up and fully functional.

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Headline: Healthwatch: Does your computer cause eyestrain?

From Naval Medical Clinic Pearl Harbor

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii - People who daily use video display terminals (VDT) frequently complain of eyestrain. But staring at a monitor may not be to blame, according to research by the Prevent Blindness America organization.

The problem may instead be caused by conditions surrounding the computer screen, many of which can be adjusted to alleviate the discomfort. According to the Prevent Blindness America organization, the eye irritation, fatigue and difficulty focusing may be the result of poor lighting or improper placement of equipment and supplies.

Pre-existing eye problems may also be a contributing factor. In evaluating your workstation, Prevent Blindness America offers some observations about computer use:

- Most users prefer a viewing distance of 20 to 26 inches, a little farther away than for reading printed text.
- The computer screen should be placed slightly below eye level.
- Reference materials should be placed on a document holder and moved close enough to the screen that your head does not have to move to view the material and the terminal.
- Lighting should be modified to eliminate glare and harsh reflections.

For more information about computers and your vision visit the Prevent Blindness America web page at <http://www.preventblindness.org/>

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Comments about and ideas for MEDNEWS are welcome. Story

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